sanctioned and the availability of funds. The amount allocated to the State of Kerala during the last 3 years is as under:—

Year	Amount (Rs. in lakhs)
1994-95	104.00
1995-96	17.00
1996-97	6.00 (Proposed)

Seminar on Problems of Goods Transport Sector

1293. SHRI K.M. KHAN: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether a National Seminar to discuss problems of Goods Transport Sector was organised at Hyderabad in January, 1997;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government propose to take some action to implement suggestions and decisions taken in the Seminar; and

(d) if so, the details thereof; and if not, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Rajya Sabha.

Widening of National Highway No. 51

1294. DR. B.B. DUTTA: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are launching a scheme, in near future to widen and convert the National Highway, No. 51 into double lane, near Tura; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) and (b) Widening to two lanes (without strengthening) of 20 km. length of National Highway No. 51 near Tura has been included in the Annual Plan 1996-97 at the cost of Rs. 6.00 crores. The details estimate from the State of Meghalaya is awaited.

Funds for Sick NTC Mills Workers

1295. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have approved funds for the sick National Textile Mills (NTC) to enable the company to pay pending wages to nearly 50,000 mills workers;

(b) whether Government are required to pay Rs. 62 crore to the idle work force of NTC, if so, the reasons therefore; and

(c) the steps Government propose to take so as to stop payment of such idle wages in future which is a loss to the exchequer?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): (a) During the current financial year, Govenrment have released funds amounting to Rs.303 crores to cover the shortfall faced by NTC in payment of wages, salaries and bonus to its employment.

(b) The monthly wage bill of NTC employees and workers is about Rs.40 crores, out of which about Rs.31 crores is estimated to be on account of idle wages.

(c) The Government had approved a Turn Around Plan in 1995 for rehabilitation of the NTC mills. The Plan was subsequently placed before the BIFR, for their consideration. The investment needs of the mills under this Plan are to be funded from proceeds of surplus land/assets. On account of difficulties being faced in obtaining BIFR approval and in effecting land sales, it has not been possible to implement the Turn Around Plan.

A unit-wise viability report has since been prepared by NTC(HC) which is presently under consideration of the Government.

Stir by Textile Workers in Kanpur

1296. DR. D. VENKATESHWAR RAO:
DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that thousands of textile workers in Kanpur are up in arms to wage a relentless stir for revival of plants and payment of pending wages; and

(b) if so, the measure taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): (a) and (b) The textile mills of National Textile Corporation (NTC) and British India Corporation (BIC), including those located at Kanpur, have been facing curtailment of production activities due to acute shortage of working capital. The Central Government has, however, been extending budgetary support to NTC and BIC towards payment of salaries and wages. Due to budgetary constraints, there are at times delay in payment of wages and salaries to the workers and employees of NTC mills. In this context, the textile workers at several places including at Kanpur resorted to dharna, gherao and other types of agitation to press for immediate release of wage and slaaries for the months of November and December 1996. Payment of salary for these two months has since been released to the employees.

Modern Machinery and upgraded Technology for Garments Industry in Maharashtra

1297. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have initiated any scheme to equip the textile industry in Maharashtra with modern machinery and upgraded technology to increase country a share in international garments trade; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Interim Relief to workers of closed Textile Mills in Gujarat

1298. SHRI AHMED PATEL: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have established any Fund/Scheme to provide interim relief to the workers of permanently or partially closed textile mills in Gujarat;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of workers likely to be covered under the Scheme;

(d) whether Government have any plans to re-open the closed textile mills in the State to save the interests of the workers; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): (a) and (b) Government of India has established the Textile Workers Rehabilitation Fund Scheme (TWRFS) to provide interim relief to workers of the permanently and partially closed textile mills in the country. Relief under the Scheme is paid at the rate of 75%, 50% and 25% of wage equivalent, in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd year, respectively.

(c) 33,156 workers have benefited in case of Gujarat till date.

(d) and (e) Government has set up Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR) to enquire into the working of sick industrial companies and to prepare and sanction, as appropriate, schemes for their revival.